

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY CHILDREN'S NETWORK

Policy Council Minutes December 3, 2003

Members/Representatives Present:

- Mandi Batalo, County Library
- Jeronimo Breen, Department of Behavioral Health
- Sandra Baxter, County Counsel
- Cathy Cimbalo, Department of Children's Services
- Bruce Davis, 3rd District Board of Supervisors Representative
- Gerald Farber, Public Defender
- Jim Felten, Department of Public Health
- Eric Frykman, Department of Public Health
- Gerald Greene, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center
- Bonnie Konowitch, Children's Network
- Don Larkin, First 5 San Bernardino
- Joyce Lewis, Department of Behavioral Health
- Susan Melanson, Children's Network
- Kent Paxton, Children's Network Officer
- Mel Rinewalt, Probation Department
- Ed Rowe, Children's Network
- Claudia Spencer, Department of Public Health
- Supervisor Hansberger, 3rd District Board of Supervisors
- Ray Wingerd, Interim Chief Probation Department
- Roberta York, Preschool Services Department
- Paula Roby, Department of Behavioral Health
- Stephen Martinez, HSS Legislation & Research
- Kathy Watkins, HSS Legislation & Research
- Wes Farmer, San Bernardino Police
- John Kochis, District Attorney's Office
- Kenne Miller, Child Advocates – CASA
- Emily Sachs, The Sun
- Lois Long, Grand Jury
- Rafael Contreras, Grand Jury
- Cassie MacDuff, The Press Enterprise
- Matt Surman, The Press Enterprise
- Douglas Payne, Economic Community Development
- Tammy Williams, Children's Network

The meeting of the Children's Network Policy Council was called to order at 12:05 p.m. and convened by Supervisor Hansberger in the Citrus Room, fifth floor, County Government Center.

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Supervisor Hansberger welcomed those present and self-introductions were made.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Kent Paxton mentioned that the agenda has been amended after the initial distribution. There was no objection to the amended agenda.

3.0 Approval of October Minutes

The October 22, 2003 minutes were approved as submitted.

4.0 Discussion/Action Items

4.1 Discussion/Action requested to approve the Children's Network 2003 Annual Report

Susan Melanson referred everyone to the final draft of the Children's Network Annual Report. The major content of the report is the outcomes for 2002 and 2003. Kent mentioned he worked with the Department of Behavioral Health and First 5 San Bernardino on their new Strategic Plans to assist them to incorporate their plans to include issues of families. Kent is now working with the Department of Children's Services to assist them with their Child Welfare Services Redesign. Kent mentioned as a goal from the Policy Council it was mentioned to tackle issues of drug exposed infants, so the Perinatal Leadership Team was formed for better outreach to physicians to improve birth outcomes. Dr. Chasnoff has been hired as a consultant to direct the Perinatal Leadership Team. Dr. Chasnoff will be here for a visit and join us at the January Policy Council meeting. Some other outcome goals for 2003 accomplished were: expand residential resources such as 22 additional beds for RCL 14 (Rate Classification Level); the work and number of Family Preservation Councils/Multi-disciplinary Teams have increased to improve the outcomes for children with 660 children in 2002 diverted from placement

and 597 children in 2003 diverted from placement; 341 stipends were issued to preschool teachers through the AB212 administered through the Child Care & Planning Council (the stipends encouraged the teachers to stay in the child care field and increase their education; the Children's Network Grant Writing Consultant, Bonnie Konowitch assisted the county in obtaining grant funding of \$815,000 and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) in obtaining grant funding of \$750,000 and many other outcomes were met. **Action: Susan asked that each department look closely at their section and get their suggestions to her by Tuesday, December 16th so that the report can be printed.**

5.0 Information Items

5.1 Children's Fund Report

Kent Paxton reported for Rebecca Stafford. Rebecca and her staff are busy at the warehouse collecting and distributing toys. First 5 San Bernardino donated \$25,000 for children in foster care and other needy children throughout the county. The Warehouse is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the case managers. Children's Fund also distributed toy boxes around the county for public to drop off gifts. Cathy Cimbalo mentioned that due to a lawsuit K.B. Toys is required to give this County \$3,000 worth of toys to children involved with Child Protective Services.

5.2 Group Home Legislation

Stephen Martinez reported the platform for the Group Home legislation is still in draft form. They are presently looking at quality control issues, such as reviews once every five years. A recommendation was to have yearly reviews of group homes that have problems with quality care issues. Stephen mentioned they are also reviewing the CCL (Community Care Licensing) regulations as they pertain to group homes. Apparently, the letters of recommendation are not tied to the CCL rate level of the group home. A concern mentioned was how does the public and county get notified of complaints registered on group homes? The plan is to get the final draft of the Group Home Legislation to go before the Board of Supervisors on the December 16th agenda. It is hopeful the legislation would assist group homes in improving their performance.

There was further discussion about a proposal of a 40-bed facility to be located in Hesperia and staffed with professionals, as opposed to several 6-bed facilities run in neighborhoods and the concerns neighbors have living so close to group homes. Dr. Greene mentioned he has seen several children placed in-group homes with medical conditions such as Diabetes, etc. There are also demands on local law enforcement, etc. Dr. Greene asked the question can group home operators be told to "fix" the problem or no RCL will be issued? **Stephen will do some further research in this area.** . For example, an RCL 12 costs the county \$5,600 per month per child. It falls to county whom places the child in the facility to monitor the child's' care. Currently, the rate letter is good for life the group homes are issued. Kent mentioned a variety of remedies are being worked on now. Kent welcomed suggestions as to what could make the proposed group home legislation more complete.

5.3 Foster Youth Services

Julian Weaver was not present at the meeting today. Kent mentioned a group of agencies meets on a regular basis regarding foster youth services ensuring the foster youth are getting appropriate educational follow-up. There will be more information to follow.

6.0 Multidisciplinary Team Recommendations Re: Jerry D.

Claudia Spencer gave a brief summary regarding Jerry D. Jerry D. survived a tragic childhood. Three years ago at age 17 he called 911 for help. San Bernardino County Sheriff arrived at the home in Wonder Valley to rescue him and his brother. Both children had been beaten, underfed, and held captive in chains for 10 years. The physical findings for Jerry D. at age 17 he was 4 feet, 11 inches tall and weighed 70 pounds. Jerry D. died of a random shooting in San Bernardino at the age of 20. Many agencies and systems were involved in Jerry D.'s life during the three years he was placed in custody. The tragic random shooting of Jerry D. triggered a review of the many agencies and systems in place at a MDT (Multi-disciplinary Team) meeting on September 23rd. The systems issues were reviewed and agencies had responded as much as they could due to Jerry D.'s age. Apparently, some of the issues for Jerry D. is he had to transition out of the children's system of care too quickly because of his age. Jerry D. had to transition out of the children's system at age 18 into the adult system.

It was mentioned that Jerry D. was emotionally and socially delayed at age 11.. It was determined that Jerry D.'s severe abuse made him a special needs child. Typically, youth ages 16 to 21 receive structure and supportive services to transition into adulthood.

A suggestion was made to reinstitute the Transitional Age Youth Multi-Disciplinary Team that use to focus on youth ages 16 to 21 that had specialized problems. The members of this particular team would be able to connect resources and make decisions for the youth. Another suggestion made was to have a single case manager assigned to follow up on the cases that have special needs for youth 16 to 21.

Kent mentioned that it was determined that the systems did not fail Jerry D., there was just limitations due to his (Jerry D.'s) age and in addition, Jerry was not considered developmentally disabled and was not eligible for LPS (Lanterman Petris Short) through the Department of Behavioral Health. It was mentioned the next time there is a specialized case like Jerry D. there will need to be some specialization of the transitional systems from youth to adult. Kent mentioned that about 16 to 17 years ago there was also a facility with 6 beds to house these youth.

Paula Roby mentioned back in the 80's there was a pilot project funded with Federal dollars to work with this special population, but it did not last because it was not built into the budget. The project was successful while it was operating to provide specialized services for the youth aging out of the youth system entering the adult system. Paula suggested if the same project is developed again, it must be with a long-term plan and funding attached to it.

Supervisor Hansberger asked what type of actions and discussions need to take place? **Kent stated Children's Network would reinstitute the Transitional Age Youth Multi-Disciplinary Team.** Supervisor Hansberger mentioned that Jerry D. was not the emotional age of a 20-year-old adult and did not have the skills to go into the adult program. Supervisor Hansberger asked how do we identify the funding source for adults who cannot care for themselves? It was mentioned there is some funding for adults who cannot care for themselves, but do not have a criminal background under the LPS (Lanterman Petris Short). Cathy Cimbalo mentioned that CCL (Community Care Licensing) does not allow an 18 year old to be placed in a group home with 16 year olds, which does create some barriers. Supervisor Hansberger asked if a Transitional Unit could be created to assist youth transitioning out of the youth system into the adult system what would it take?

ACTION: Supervisor Hansberger asked a committee to meet and come up with a model and then determine funding for the model. He mentioned the committee is to primarily focus on the model and the funding piece can follow later. He then asked the information to be presented to this group. Supervisor Hansberger asked that the model cover the 16 to 21 year olds and see what type of waivers will be needed from CCL?

RECOMMENDATION: Kent mentioned he had the basic components of a model. Kent mentioned that he could readily identify 15 to 16 youth that could use some special attention now. Kent agreed to report back to this group with his findings after the first part of the year.

7.0 Other

No comment.

8.0 Public Comment

No comment.

9.0 Next Meeting: January 28, 2004

Respectfully Submitted,

**Tammy Williams, Children's Network
Policy Council Recording Secretary**

/tgw